



Pennsylvania Municipal League

2019 Legislative Priorities

Municipal Mandate Reform

Collective Bargaining

Act 111, the Police and Fireman Collective Bargaining Act, is 50 years old and has never been updated. Public safety employee pay and benefits, however, have increased significantly since the late 1960s. A “reset” of Act 111 is necessary to provide a level playing field for municipal employers reflecting today’s work standards and economic realities.

Public Safety Pensions

Municipal pension costs are one of the most pressing financial challenges facing local governments today. Pension statutes must be updated to provide cost predictability and financial sustainability without negatively impacting current employees.

Tax-Exempt Entities

Municipalities host a multitude of tax-exempt entities. While offering important community services, tax-exempt entities do not directly contribute to the tax base. This creates an inequitable burden on the entities that do pay taxes. Municipalities and taxpayers need relief from the tax-exempt burden. Regular review of each tax-exempt entity’s designation, as well as continuation of a high threshold to meet that designation are also important aspects to relieving the burden.

Investment in Core Communities

Revitalization

Investment in core communities must be a priority for the Commonwealth. Housing, job creation, private investment, venture capital, business tax credits and low-interest loan financing are key economic development tools that urban municipalities must be able to access in order to create and maintain livable, attractive communities.

Public Education

Investment in public education is especially important to core communities. Substandard

schools are the number one reason young professionals with school-age children leave urban communities for the suburbs. Quality education in a safe setting is vital to rebuilding urban neighborhoods. Access to pre-K and a full and fair funding formula for the Commonwealth’s entire public school system are essential components to an investment in public education.

Local Control

Local Taxation

Local governments provide services under an archaic and regressive taxing structure that does not reflect today’s society or meet today’s needs. The flexibility of options, determined locally or regionally, would better serve taxpayers. Local government officials are ready to accept the responsibility of determining the local taxing options that best fit their community.

Local Use of Radar

Radar is a reliable, accurate and efficient public safety tool. Pennsylvania is the only state still protecting speeding motorists by denying localities the use of radar. It is a falsehood that radar will be used as a local revenue tool. With the Commonwealth receiving the bulk of fine revenue, the cost of enforcement will outweigh the municipal share.

Preservation of Local Zoning and Rights-of-Way Management

Local zoning laws protect the health, safety and welfare of residents and property. Zoning also guides growth and preserves the natural and historic features of a community. Legislation aimed at preempting local land use decisions and limiting rights-of-way management infringes on a local governing body’s inherent duty to protect its citizens and their property.

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